

CLAIMS

1. A domestic appliance comprising an appliance body (2), in which is formed a utility space (4), an illumination device (6) for illuminating the utility space (4), a door (8) for closing off the utility space (4), a door handle (10), an electrical control circuit (12) for automatically switching on the illumination device (6) as a function of human touch on the door handle (10), characterised in that the door handle (10) is designed as a capacitor body, of which the capacitance may be altered by human touch, that the door handle (10) consists of electrically conductive material or contains such as part of the capacitor body, that an electrically conductive path is formed from the electrically conductive material of the door handle (10) to the control circuit (12), that the control circuit (12) is designed so as to identify the capacitance and for the automatic actuation of the illumination device (6) as a function of the capacitance of the door handle (10).
2. The domestic appliance comprising an appliance body (2), in which is formed a utility space (4), an illumination device (6) for illuminating the utility space (4), a door (8) for closing off the utility space (4), a contact element (10), and an electrical control circuit (12) for automatically switching on the illumination device (6) as a function of a human touch on the contact element (10), characterised in that the contact element (10) is designed as a capacitor body, of which the capacitance may be altered by human touch, that the contact element (10) is formed from electrically conductive material of the contact

element (10) to the control circuit (12), and that the control circuit (12) is designed to recognise the capacitance and to actuate the illumination device (6) automatically as a function of the capacitance of the contact element.

3. The domestic appliance according to one of the foregoing claims, characterised in that a switch (50) is provided which can be actuated by the door (8), which is connected to the control circuit (12) and has different switch states, depending on whether the door is open or closed, and that the control circuit (12) is designed to control the illumination device (6) as a function of the individual switch state in each case, and therefore as a function of whether the door (8) is open or closed.
4. The domestic appliance according to Claim 1, characterised in that the control circuit (12) is arranged at or in the appliance body (2), that the electrical path is provided with an interruption contact arrangement (16), which closes the path when the door is closed and interrupts it when the door is opened, whereby a contact part (18) is arranged at the door and a contactable contact part (20) is arranged at the appliance body, and that the electrical control circuit (6) is also designed as a function of whether the interruption contact arrangement (16) and therefore also the door (8) is closed or open.
5. The domestic appliance according to one of the foregoing claims, characterised in that the control circuit (12) is designed as a dimmer circuit, by means of which the illumination device (6), when switched on, passes automatically from

the switched off state through an illumination state which slowly becomes stronger, which is progressively less dimmed, until the fully switched on illumination state is reached.

6. The domestic appliance according to one of the foregoing claims, characterised in that the control circuit (12) is designed as a dimmer circuit, by means of which the illumination device (6), when switched off, passes automatically from the fully switched on state through a progressively dimmer illumination state, until the fully switched off illumination state is reached.
7. The domestic appliance according to one of the foregoing claims, characterised in that a part of the electrical path (14) is designed as a securing element (32, 38) for securing the door handle (10) to the door (8).
8. The domestic appliance according to one of the foregoing claims, characterised in that the electrically conductive material on the surface of the handle is located in an area which can be touched by hand by the actuation of the door.
9. The domestic appliance according to one of Claims 1 to 7, characterised in that the electrically conductive material is covered by an electrically insulating material in a handle area which can be touched by hand by the actuation of the door.
10. The domestic appliance according to one of the foregoing claims, characterised in that the control circuit (12) is connected to an appliance operation circuit (24), and is designed to switch the illumination device (6) as a function of the

particular switching state in each case of the appliance operating circuit (24).